

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1840

INFO USIA WASHDC

AMCONSUL IBADAN

AMCONSUL KADUNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PINS, NI

SUBJECT: FMG AGAIN MOVES TO HARNESS MEDIA

REF: LAGOS 9215 AND PREVIOUS

1. SUMMARY: IN FURTHER MOVE CONTROL MEDIA, FMG FORMALLY ANNOUNCES INTENTION ESTABLISH FEDERAL AUTHORITY TO COORDINATE RADIO/TV BROADCASTING. ALSO REITERATES PLANS ESTABLISH NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY AND PRESS COUNCIL. END SUMMARY.

2. ADDRESSING OPENING SESSION SEVENTH CONFERENCE CHIEF EXECUTIVES BROADCASTING ORGANIZATION OF NIGERIA (BON) IN LAGOS OCTOBER 20, FMG INFORMATION COMMISSIONER HARUNA STATED GOVERNMENT HAS HELD PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS AND NOW REVIEWING PROPOSAL TO EFFECT ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW FEDERAL AGENCY TO BE CALLED BROADCASTING AUTHORITY OF NIGERIA (BAN). HARUNA INDICATED PURPOSE OF NEW BODY WOULD BE TO INSURE "UNITY OF PURPOSE AND ACTION" AMONG NATION'S SEVEN BROADCASTING ORGANIZATIONS (DEFERALLY-OWNED NIGERIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION AND SIX STATE-OWNED BODIES).

3. HARUNA ALSO ANNOUNCES GOVERNMENT HAS APPROVED PLAN SET UP NATIONAL COLOR TELEVISION NETWORK AND SAID FMG FIVING  
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ACTIVE CONSIDERATION WAYS MAKING RADIO AND TELEVISION

RECEIVERS MORE READILY ACCESSIBLE GENERAL PUBLIC.

4. COMMISSIONER REITERATED LINE THAT FMG " DETERMINED TO SEE THAT RADIO AND TELEVISION JOURNALISM CONTRIBUTED EFFECTIVELY TO MOBILIZATION OF OUR PEOPLE AND TO MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND ALL CLASSES AND LEVELS OF PEOPLE." FMG THEREFORE "PROCEEDING WITH" PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED PLANS (REFTELS) SET UP NIGERIAN NEWS AGENCY TO "PROVIDE SUITABLE RESOURCES FOR JOURNALISTS." PLANS ALSO "BEING DEVELOPED" ESTABLISH PRESS COUNCIL (ALSO ANNOUNCED PREVIOUSLY) FOR BOTH NEWSPAPERS AND BROADCASTING JOURNALISTS.

5. COMMENT: DETAILS OF ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS BAN NOT SPELLED OUT, BUT INTENT INCREASE EFFECTIVE FMG DIRECTION OVER NATION'S BROADCASTING IS CLEAR. WHILE INCREASED CONTROL AND COORDINATION SHOULD BRING BETTER UTILIZATION OF FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IN RAPID EXPANSION OF RADIO/TV FACILITIES AND COULD INCREASE THEIR EFFECTIVENESS AS MEDIA FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND UNITY AS FMG HAS INDICATED, IT IS APPARENT THAT CENTRALIZED CONTROL CAN BE USED TO SHAPE PUBLIC ATTITUDES FOR POLITICAL AS WELL AS DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS, A FACT OF SOME MOMENT FOR THE FUTURE.

6. FMG FIRST ANNOUNCED PLANS ESTABLISH NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY AND PRESS COUNCIL MORE THAN MONTH AGO. UNCHARACTERISTIC SLOWNESS OF THIS ACTION-ORIENTED GOVERNMENT IN IMPLEMENTING THESE PLANS APPARENTLY REFLECTS BOTH ORGANIZATIONAL COMPLEXITIES AND POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES INVOLVED. PRESS COUNCIL IS MOST SENSITIVE OF THE THREE MEDIA BODIES, AS IT WOULD CERTIFY PROACTING JOURNALISTS". WHILE MOST JOURNALISTS SUBSCRIBE TO IDEA OF INDEPENDENT PRESS COUNCIL WHICH WOULD PROVIDE SELF-POLICING CAPABILITY, MANY OBJECT TO GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF SUCH A BODY.  
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## Message Attributes

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